

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-04 L-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02

EB-07 CIEP-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /061 W

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R 231210Z OCT 75

FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2439

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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ARA/CAR FOR PALAZZOLO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, NA

SUBJECT: DISSENSION IN MEP RANKS

1. SUMMARY: ARUBA'S MAJORITY PARTY, MOVIMIENTO ELECTORAL DI PUEBLO (MEP), IS UNDERGOING FIRST TREMORS OF WHAT MAY BE A WIDE RANGING PARTY SHAKE-UP. MEP BOSS BETICO CROES REPORTEDLY HAS FORMALLY DEMANDED THE RESIGNATION OF PARTY DEPUTY LEADER WATTY VOS FROM THE POST OF GNA VICE MINISTER PRESIDENT, BUT WILL ALLOW HIM TO REMAIN AS MINISTER OF JUSTICE. CROES' ACTION CLIMAXES A MONTH-LONG INTRA-PARTY FEUD AND MAY PORTEND AN EXTENSIVE REALIGNMENT WITHIN MEP. END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL AND PERSONAL RIVALRY BETWEEN VOS AND CROES BROKE INTO THE NEWS ON SEPT. 19 WHEN SEVERAL VOS SUPPORTERS TOOK PUBLIC EXCEPTION TO OFFHAND COMMENTS CRITICAL OF VOS MADE BY CROES' WIFE AT A COCKTAIL PARTY. A PARTY COUNCIL MEETING WAS CALLED OCTOBER 15 TO SORT OUT THE DISPUTE. ACCORDING TO PUBLISHED REPORTS, BOTH SIDES SQUARED OFF, BUT THE UNEXPECTED STRENGTH OF VOS' SUPPORT FORCED CROES TO MODIFY HIS INITIAL

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DEMAND THAT VOS RESIGN FROM BOTH POSTS. LATER THAT EVENING,

IN A TELEGRAM SIGNED BY CROES AS PARTY LEADER, VOS WAS FORMALLY REQUESTED TO RESIGN AS GNA VICE MINISTER PRESIDENT. MEP SOURCES NOW INDICATE CROES MAY BE PLANNING A SHAKE-UP OF MEP'S 6 ISLAND COUNCIL DEPUTIES AND 3 GNA MINISTERS. INSTITUTION OF A PARTY TRIBUNAL (PRESUMABLY HEADED BY CROES) TO RULE ON FUTURE INTRA-PARTY DISPUTES IS ALSO SAID TO BE UNDER CONSIDERATION, BUT A PARTY DECREED GAG ORDER HAS INHIBITED REPORTING ON DEVELOPMENTS. VOS HAS NOT YET RESPONDED PUBLICLY TO CROES' TELEGRAM AND HAS NOT YET MADE ANY MOVE TO STEP DOWN. INFORMED GNA SOURCES INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT A FORMAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILL BE CALLED WITHIN 2 WEEKS, AT WHICH TIME VOS WILL HAND THE VICE MINISTER PRESIDENT'S JOB TO FINANCE MINISTER DE KORT (ALSO OF MEP).

3. COMMENT: INDICATIONS OF A CROES-VOS POWER STRUGGLE HAVE BEEN NOTED SINCE THE APRIL 1975 ISLAND COUNCIL ELECTIONS, BUT UNTIL CROES' OCT. 15 EDICT, THE MOST SERIOUS MANIFESTATION OF RIVALRY WAS CROES' UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT TO REMOVE VOS' RIGHT-HAND MAN, DELWYN GOMEZ, AS ONE OF MEP'S ISLAND COUNCIL DEPUTIES. VOS' DEMOTION, IF IT GOES THROUGH AS EXPECTED, WILL CONSOLIDATE CROES' HOLD OVER MEP AND THEREBY STRENGTHEN HIS HAND VIS-A-VIS NVP-U'S PRIME MINISTER EVERTSZ, WHO IS ONLY NOW RECOVERING FROM SEPTEMBER'S MESSY EXPULSION OF EX-MINISTER MCWILLIAM FROM NVP-U. (CURACAO'S A-42.) CROES IS LIKELY TO USE ANY EXTRA LEVERAGE TO FORCE FURTHER DECENTRALIZATION OF THE GNA IN HIS DRIVE FOR GREATER AUTONOMY AND BENEFITS FOR ARUBA.

HANSON

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## Message Attributes

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